CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for controlling a multimedia system for activate and deactivate a plurality of multimedia applications, the method comprising:

monitoring a two-level switch, wherein the switch is activated by depressing the switch;

determining whether the switch has been depressed;

determining whether the multimedia system is active;

activating the multimedia system if the system is not active and the switch has been depressed;

determining a time duration the switch has been depressed;

de-energizing the multimedia system when the switch has been depressed for a predefined time duration; and

deactivating one of the plurality of multimedia system applications when the switch has been depressed for less than the predefined time duration.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message on a display screen indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has been deactivated.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message on a display screen indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has been activated.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message on a display screen indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has failed to deactivate.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message on a display screen indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has failed to activate.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle phone system.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle navigational system.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle stereo system.

9. A system for controlling a multimedia system to activate and deactivate a plurality of multimedia applications, the system comprising:

a depressible switch; and

a controller in communication with the switch for determining a length of time the switch has been depressed, wherein the depression of the switch for a period of time greater than a predefined threshold deactivates the multimedia system and wherein the depression of the switch for a period of time less than the predefined threshold deactivates one of the plurality of multimedia system applications.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein the controller further comprises an electronic memory for storing executable code for determining the period of time the switch is depressed.

11. The system of claim 9, further comprising a display screen for displaying a message indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has been deactivated.

12. The system of claim 9, further comprising a display screen for displaying a message indicating that the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications has failed to activate.

13. The system of claim 9, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle phone system.

14. The system of claim 9, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle navigational system.

15. The system of claim 9, wherein the one of the plurality of multimedia system applications is an in-vehicle stereo system.